

Freie Universität Berlin
25. April 2018

'Systematic lacunae' – incomplete utterances in digital writing

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Digitalization is changing our communicative habits at an amazing pace. Text messages in different forms of '(informal) mobile electronic writing' often yield spontaneous and sometimes very strange-looking written products (cf. for French Anis 2007, Gadet 2008, Stark 2015, 2017 etc.).

The talk will try to describe and discuss different cases of argument drop in Swiss French text messages and WhatsApp messages, as illustrated in example (1):

- (1) *∅ semaine prochaine ∅ m'exporte à Genève*
week next myself export to Geneva
'Next week, I'll be going to Geneva.'

They have been labelled repeatedly as features typical of 'abbreviated registers', especially for English (headlines or diaries, cf. Haegeman 1997, 2013, or Stowell 1991, 2013). A sketch of a quantitative and qualitative analysis will let us help discover the regularities underlying these cases of 'drop', whose distribution is maybe more constrained by syntax than communicative, extralinguistic factors.

Selected references

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